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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. JOLLY).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

February 3, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DAVID W. JOLLY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

MAKE PROGRESS ON LEGAL IMMIGRATION RATHER THAN BLAME PRESIDENT OBAMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIÉRREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, Republicans in the House are holding a hearing that will blame the Obama administration because thousands of children and young adults are fleeing three countries in Central America and are seeking safety in the United States and in other countries.

The premise, as far as the Republicans on the committee are concerned,

is that President Obama has not deported anyone or enforced any immigration laws. As far as they are concerned, the President's executive actions—which we should remember are for a different set of immigrants altogether and which Republicans have delayed until the Supreme Court decides on a lawsuit this summer—are a clarification call to everyone in these three particular countries to attempt to come to the U.S. It is not the rampant murders, the extortion, the forced conscription into street gangs, or the utter collapse of civil society and civil order that is driving people to risk their lives to seek safety here. No. It is “that” President whom Republicans love to hate. He is to blame.

I hope that at least a little time at the Judiciary hearing on Thursday will be devoted to the problems our government has faced over the past couple of years in handling young and unaccompanied asylum seekers from Central America. We know that some women were kept in lockups for too long, that the term “humane family detention” is an oxymoron, that children were released to guardians who did not have the children's best interests in mind, and that some were forced into human trafficking situations, and we should have been more vigilant. Those are the issues I hope we can focus on.

We should be asking: How can we remain a society that protects the innocent, that cares for children who have put themselves in our care, and that does so in accordance with the laws of this Nation and the laws of basic decency?

Unfortunately, at this point, we know what Judiciary Committee hearings are not about. They are not serious attempts to craft legislation that creates an immigration system that works for the American people. Hearings in this Congress are not about how the Congress can create legal and controlled immigration alternatives so

that people do not try to come illegally or spend thousands of dollars on smugglers and traffickers.

We will probably not discuss how a generation of temporary protected status for certain immigrants has not created a long-term, sustainable situation in immigrant communities or sending countries so that immigration is safe, legal, orderly, and voluntary.

We will spend a lot of time discussing whether President Obama is to blame but very little time actually discussing why people come in the dead of night, holding onto a freight train, and running a gauntlet with smugglers and not what can be done to have immigration where people come in the light of day with visas, passports, and plane tickets.

We simply will not discuss how we get from this broken reality to a feasible and sustainable future of immigration. Rather, the Judiciary Committee will continue to feed the hucksterism and red meat politics that Americans hate, and they hate it with good reason.

In the years since 2007, when President George Bush started ramping up raids and deportations, right through the 2 million deportations of President Obama's, I can honestly say I have not seen such fear and anxiety in immigrant communities, where mothers and fathers are keeping their children out of school because of the fear of being arrested by immigration authorities.

The home raids announced by the Obama administration around Christmas have struck a nerve. They have sparked rumors and panic and have multiplied as city after city has experienced raids or the rumors of raids. Children are taken as they go to school—yes, as they go to school. The government has stopped them and has arrested them.

The fear and anxiety has nothing to do with Donald Trump or with the fantasy that he has of deporting millions

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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